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14 October 1963

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Project OXCART - Status

1. Project OXCART has as its mission the development and maintenance of an operational capability which will permit immediate and successful completion of covert aerial reconnaissance missions of denied areas to obtain high resolution photographic data of technical intelligence quality.

2. The vehicle by which the OXCART program will accomplish its mission is the Lockheed A-12, a high altitude (85,000 feet plus), high speed (mach 3.2) airplane of the midwing monoplane type, constructed of both metal and plastic materials. Significant features are cockpit and military equipment bay pressurization, a thin, low-aspect-ratio wing, canted fins located atop mid-span mounted engine nacelles, and tricycle landing gear. The main structural material is titanium alloy, except for those areas where temperature requirements dictate the use of stainless steel or other high temperature alloys. The engines for this aircraft are two Pratt & Whitney turbojets, model JT11D-30 (commonly called "J-58"), designed to develop 32,500 lbs. thrust each. Several camera systems are under development or modification for use in the A-12. Two principle cameras which have test flown to date are the Perkin Elmer 18" f/3.8 with a designed one foot ground resolution and the Eastman Kodak 21" f/4 with an anticipated two foot ground resolution.

3. The first of the ten OXCART aircraft was delivered for flight test during Fiscal Year 1962. Flight test continued throughout Fiscal Year 1963 and will extend through Fiscal Year 1964. To date, the aircraft has flown mach 3.06 and attained a maximum altitude of 75,000 feet. Most of the

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aircraft were delivered in Fiscal Year 1963, with the two final aircraft being delivered in Fiscal Year 1964. Operational qualification will be attained in the last half of Fiscal Year 1964. Full operational status of all systems will be achieved in Fiscal Year 1965.

cc: EXO/NRO  
DD/NRO  
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